

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 05194 070840Z

11  
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W  
----- 061274

R 070816Z SEP 74  
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2373  
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T AMMAN 5194

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, US, JO, IS, XF  
SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING ON PLO

REF: AMMAN 5189 AND STATE 196086

1. PRIME MINISTER RIFAI SEPTEMBER 5 SOUGHT OUT AMBASSADOR AND ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION STORY EMANATING FROM STATE DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN ON FACT U.S. PLANNED TO MEET WITH PLO AT HIGH LEVEL. PRIME MINISTER INDICATED HIS CONCERN THAT WE WOULD MOVE AHEAD WITHOUT INFORMING JORDAN. JORDANIANS UNDERSTOOD THAT WE HAD UNDERTAKEN TO KEEP THEM IN TOUCH WITH ANY SUCH DEVELOPMENTS AHEAD OF TIME. HE PARTICULARLY ASKED WHEN WE WERE GOING TO MEET WITH PLO AND INDICATED WITH MORE THAN NORMAL AMOUNT OF PERSONAL ANGUISH THAT THIS WAS JUST ANOTHER US EFFORT TO UNDERMINE JORDANIAN DESIRE TO GET NEGOTIATIONS STARTED WITH ISRAELIS.

2. I ASSURED RIFAI THAT STORIES HE HAD BEEN READING WERE CONFUSED. THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN STATEMENTS WE HAD MADE PUBLICLY AND ALSO PRIVATELY TO JORDAN ON THIS SUBJECT. I SENT HIM FULL TEXT OF PRESS BRIEFING FOR SEPTEMBER 3 AND ALSO THAT OF JULY 12 TO WHICH SEPTEMBER 3

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REFERS.

3. IN PROVIDING HIM MATERIALS, I SAID BASIC INTENT OF SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT WAS FIRST TO DENY THAT ANY CONTACTS HAD TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN USG AND PLO. SECONDLY, I SAID SPOKESMAN NOTED USG PUBLIC RECORD REMAINS UNCHANGED AND REFERRED IN THIS CONNECGTION TO JULY 12 STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT "THERE HAVE BEEN NO DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS WITH PALESTINIANS BY INSTRUCTED AMERICAN OFFICIALS COMMUNICATING ANY AMERICAN POSITION." FINALLY, I REPEATED, AS HE WILL KNEW, THAT US FOR SOME YEARS HAD TAKEN POSITION THAT "LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF PALESTINIANS" SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AS PART OF ANY MIDDLE EASTERN SETTLEMENT. HE REPLIED HE WAS AWARE OF THESE POSITIONS AND THEY GAVE HIM NO REAL TROUBLE.

4. LATE SEPTEMBER 6, PRIME MINISTER WAS AGAIN IN TOUCH WITH ME. HE SAID HE HAD READ OVER MATERIAL THREE OR FOUR TIMES. HE INDICATED HE WAS LEFT IN A STATE OF "UNCERTAINTY" CREATED BY SPOKESMAN'S SEPTEMBER 3 ANSWERS TO VARIOUS QUESTIONS FROM REPORTERS. IN ADDITION, HE ADDED THAT HE COULD ONLY CONCLUDE "THERE WAS MORE GOING ON THAN JORDAN KNEW ABOUT". I ASSURED HIM THAT WAS NOT THE CASE. HE ENDED WITH A REQUEST THAT WE PLEASE KEEP JORDAN INFORMED ABOUT WHAT WE ARE DOING IN THIS AREA.

5. REPEATED FUZZINESS ON PART OF DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN ON THIS SUBJECT IS SEEN BY JORDANIANS AS CALCULATED EFFORT TO KEEP THEM IN STATE OF UNCERTAINTY. AT THIS CRUCIAL TIME, WITH RABIN GOING TO US, THEY ALSO TEND TO SEE SUCH STATEMENTS AS AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERMINE THEIR NEGOTIATING POSITION IN TERMS OF THEIR DESIRE TO HAVE THE NEXT CHANCE AT DISENGAGEMENT WITH THE ISRAELIS. WE FORWARDING DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S SEPTEMBER 6 STATEMENT ON SUBJECT TO PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. THIS WILL HELP ENORMOUSLY. END COMMENT. PICKERING

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## Message Attributes

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